DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 417 292 CE 075 975

AUTHOR	Kerka, Sandra
TITLE	Diversity Training. Trends and Issues Alerts.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Columbus, OH.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	4p.
CONTRACT	RR93002001
PUB TYPE	ERIC Publications (071) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Annotated Bibliographies; *Cultural Pluralism; *Diversity (Institutional); Educational Needs; *Interpersonal Competence; *On the Job Training; *Organizational Climate; Program Design; *Sensitivity Training; Trend Analysis; Work Environment

ABSTRACT

According to surveys of companies employing more than 100 workers, the number of companies with diversity training (DT) programs increased from 40% in 1992 to 50-56% in 1996. Motivations behind DT include compliance with legal mandates, fear of lawsuits, social justice, desire to expand into diverse markets, and overall organizational transformation. At the same time, a backlash against DT is arising that has been explained in terms of such factors as reaction to rapid social change, deep-seated prejudice, misunderstanding of diversity, and badly planned and implemented training programs. One core issue is lack of consensus regarding the meaning of diversity. To some, DT should be focused narrowly on those categories protected by law (race, gender, and disability), whereas others argue for a more inclusive definition encompassing age, educational level, family structure, job function, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and values. Effective DT programs start with an inclusive definition of diversity and clear objectives that are linked with organizational goals and that reflect employee involvement in design and top-level support. Effective DT programs also focus on finding ways for people to work cooperatively despite differing perspectives. Contains an annotated bibliography of 29 print and Web-based resources. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 417 292

Diversity Training
Trends and Issues Alerts

Sandra Kerka

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
Center on Education and Training for Employment
College of Education
The Ohio State University
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to
improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this
document do not necessarily represent
official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE015775

TRENDS AND ISSUES ALERTS

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

by Sandra Kerka 1998

Diversity Training

In the multicultural 1990s, workplace diversity training (DT) initiatives are everywhere. Surveys of companies employing over 100 indicate that about 40% had DT programs in 1992, 50-56% by 1996 (Gordon 1995; Wentling and Palma-Rivas 1997). The American Society for Training and Development's 1990 survey turned up 15 diversity trainers in 1990, 136 in 1996 (Wentling and Palma-Rivas 1997). Motivations behind DT include compliance with legal mandates, fear of lawsuits, social justice, desire to expand into diverse markets, and overall organizational transformation. At the same time, a backlash is arising and "diversity training programs are exploding in their sponsors' faces" (Gordon 1995, p. 25). Reasons for the backlash may be reaction to rapid social change, deep-seated prejudice, sensationalistic journalism, misunderstanding of diversity and its identification with "political correctness," and badly planned and implemented training programs (Mobley and Payne 1992).

One core issue is the lack of consensus on the meaning of diversity. To some, the focus is narrowly on those categories protected by law, primarily race, gender, and disability (Day 1995); training is thus limited, ineffectively, to "changing white males" (Karp and Sutton 1993). Others argue for a broadly inclusive definition that encompasses age, educational level, family structure, job function, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and values, among others (Pegg 1997) and a focus on understanding and valuing the "varied perspectives and approaches to work" that people of all types of backgrounds bring (Thomas and Ely 1996, p. 80).

Characteristics of flawed DT programs include slotting of people into identity groups; trainers who represent only one point of view; attempts to change attitudes and personal opinions, not behavior; initiatives that are not connected to organizational goals and lack management commitment; providers who lack credentials, have a political agenda, deliver off-the-shelf programs, or use unorthodox, hostile tactics; training that is brief, perfunctory, or punitive; and hiring, promotion, and reward systems that do not practice what the programs preach (Day 1995; Gordon 1995; Karp and Sutton 1993; Mobley and Payne 1995). Effective programs start with an inclusive definition of diversity and clear objectives that are linked with organizational goals; employees are involved in their design and top-level support is evident. Training teams reflect diverse points of view, and training includes awareness (examining assumptions, biases, stereotypes) and skill development (listening, communication, conflict resolution). Resistance is confronted by providing facts, appealing to deep values, and identifying human commonalities while recognizing the great variation in their expression. Overall, the focus is on finding ways for people to work cooperatively despite differing perspectives. Beyond a token diversity training program, what is required is organizational culture change that incorporates respect for diversity into policies, procedures, and practices. The print and web resources listed here provide additional information.

Print Resources

American Association of Retired Persons. ***How to Develop a Diversity Commitment***. Washington, DC: AARP, 1994. (ED 392 891)
Presents a series of steps that can be used by employers to initiate or modify a diversity program, based on the city of San Diego's experience.

Carnevale, A.P., and Stone, S.C. "Diversity: Beyond the Golden Rule." ***Training and Development*** 48, no. 10 (October 1994): 22-39. (EJ 490 406)
Diversity implies differences in people based on their identifications with various groups. Organizations that have welcomed diversity are more productive and have a competitive advantage. Diversity training can be awareness based (cognitive) or skill based (behavioral).

Carr, C. "Diversity and Performance." ***Performance Improvement Quarterly*** 6, no. 4 (1993): 115-126.
Attempts to define diversity, identifies the conflict often associated with it, and investigates the conditions under which diversity can benefit organizations and the ways in which organizations must change in order to benefit.

Chung, W.V. "Challenges Confronting the Diversity Professor in Training Corporate America." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association, San Diego, CA, November 1996. (ED 405 623)
Organizational culture holds the key to the long-term success of diversity efforts. Diversity professionals who specialize in multiculturalism and organizational communication should embrace theories that yield a "managing diversity" approach.

Day, L.E.O. "The Pitfalls of Diversity Training." ***Training and Development*** 49, no. 12 (December 1995): 24-29. (EJ 514 436)
Bad diversity training programs can be damaging. The case of training gone awry at the Federal Aviation Administration (in which participants filed formal complaints and investigations followed into the specific training practices used) illustrates the importance of careful development of diversity training.

"Diversity in the Workplace in HRD." In ***Academy of Human Resource Development Proceedings, St. Louis, Missouri, March 2-5, 1995***. Academy of Human Resource Development, 1995. (ED 398 364)
Includes "The Status of Valuing and Managing Diversity in Fortune 500 Manufacturing and Fortune 500 Service Organizations" (Sandra J. Johnson); " A Theory of Diversity" (Christopher Washington); "Work Force Diversity in Fortune 500 Corporations Headquartered in Minnesota: Concepts and Practices" (Karin Tomervik); and "Race and Ethnicity-Related Cultural Diversity Training Programs: A Typology" (Larry G. Martin).

Ewert, M.; Rice, J.K.; and Lauderdale, E. "Training for Diversity." ***Adult Learning*** 6, no. 5 (May-June 1995): 27-28. (EJ 502 531)
Cultural diversity affects organizations in several ways: recruitment/retention, outreach beyond traditional clientele, management styles and decision making, and interorganizational relationships. Intercultural effectiveness can be improved by making training strategic, building cultural knowledge, targeting unconscious discrimination, and studying non-Western worldviews.

Gordon, J. "Different from What?" ***Training*** 32, no. 5 (May 1995): 25-34. (EJ 504 456)
Some workplace diversity programs have sown hostility as diversity training has become a full-fledged industry in the United States. The best approach may be to recognize commonalities and to be willing to capitalize on differences.

Hayles, V.R., and Russell, A.M. ***The Diversity Directive: Why Some Initiatives Fail & What to Do about It***. Chicago, IL: McGraw-Hill/Irwin Professional Publishing, 1997.
This guide for individuals and organizations moves beyond diversity awareness training toward systems, processes, and behavior that promote substantive, lasting change. It presents individual, group, and organizational development models as well as tools and techniques.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Jamieson, D., and O'Mara, J. ***Managing Workforce 2000.*** San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.
Explains how managers can gain the "diversity advantage" through flex-management, a mindset that includes deep appreciation of individual differences and creation of more individualized policies, systems, and management practices.

Johnson, S.J. "Connecting Diversity Efforts in the Workplace with Business Mission, Goals, and Objectives." ***Performance Improvement Quarterly*** 7, no. 1 (1994): 31-39. (EJ 478 012)
Discusses the management and evaluation of diversity in the work force and emphasizes the need to link diversity issues with organizational goals and performance needs. Differences between a "quick fix" and systematic action are examined, and measuring results of diversity efforts is considered.

Karp, H.B., and Sutton, N. "Where the Diversity Training Goes Wrong." ***Training*** 30, no. 7 (July 1993): 30-34. (EJ 465 015)
Problems occur in diversity training when (1) trainers are all women or minorities; (2) sensitizing only white male managers is emphasized; (3) a specific set of values is reflected; (4) it is guilt driven or deals only with awareness; (5) focus is on how something is said, not why; and (6) orientation is past/future but not present.

Labich, K. "Making Diversity Pay." ***Fortune*** 134, no. 5 (September 9, 1996): 177-180. (EJ 528 926)
Discusses how a variety of companies are dealing with the demographic realities of a changing labor force. Suggests that at the core of managing a more diverse work force is making all people feel comfortable and connected with the company.

Mobley, M., and Payne, T. "Backlash!: The Challenge to Diversity Training." ***Training and Development*** 46, no. 12 (December 1992): 45-52. (EJ 454 053)
Awareness of diversity in the workplace is on the rise, but so is a backlash to some of the issues that it raises. Ways to prevent backlash include getting management support, involving employees in training design, using an inclusive definition of diversity, acknowledging resistance, valuing sameness, and affirming the value of individual views.

Mueller, N.L. "Wisconsin Power and Light's Model Diversity Program." ***Training and Development*** 50, no. 3 (March 1996): 57-60. (EJ 519 341)
Wisconsin Power and Light used results of an employee survey on cultural diversity to develop a training program based on increasing awareness of the significance of being able to work together. Employees identify specific individual actions and formulate work-group ground rules that respect diversity.

Pegg, L. C. "Diversity Training and Education in the Work Place." ***Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*** 19, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 62-66. (EJ 542 150)
Demonstrates opportunities and dangers of diversity training. Outlines steps needed to manage transformation to multiculturalism and makes recommendations for lasting change in the areas of leadership, education and training, evaluation and follow-up, culture and management systems, and communications.

Rossett, A., and Bickham, T. "Diversity Training: Hope, Faith and Cynicism." ***Training*** 31, no. 1 (January 1994): 40-46. (EJ 475 328)
Goals of diversity training may be compliance, harmony, inclusion, justice, and transformation. Effective programs are predicated on leadership support, authentic training strategies, and alignment with organizational goals.

Swanson, R. A. "Valuing Diversity." ***Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education*** 19, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 52-55. (EJ 542 148)
Diversity is seen as either a vital organizational process, a value-added activity, an optional activity, or a waste of resources. Performance is the key to making diversity a core organizational process. The focus should be on how and whether diversity contributes to organizational performance.

Tan, D.L., Morris, L., and Romero, J. "Changes in Attitude after Diversity Training." ***Training and Development*** 50, no. 9 (September 1996): 54-55. (EJ 530 292)
It is critical that managers and supervisors promote new attitudes and behavior. A second stage of diversity training should focus on the application of diversity ideas and the development of an environment that is conducive to conflict resolution.

Thomas, D.A., and Ely, R.J. "Making Differences Matter." ***Harvard Business Review*** 74, no. 5 (September-October 1996): 79-90.
Explains why organizations should go beyond the old rationales for diversity (discrimination-fairness and access-legitimacy) to the learning and effectiveness paradigm, which shows that diversity can leverage different perspectives and improve the way work is done.

Thomas, V.C. "The Downside of Diversity." ***Training and Development*** 48, no. 1 (January 1994): 60-62.
Diversity training can cause confusion and hostility. A cautious, realistic approach that aims for long-term results can make it work.

Todd, F. "Professional Learning for Ethno-Cultural Diversity." ***International Journal of Lifelong Education*** 13, no. 2 (March-April 1994): 81-124. (EJ 482 704)
Reviews issues in police training and approaches to race relations education. Suggests that the learning took place outside the classroom and was collaborative (police-community), concluding that race relations policy must be developed through a multicultural dialogue.

Van Eron, A.M. "How to Work with a Diversity Consultant." ***Training and Development*** 50, no. 4 (April 1996): 41-44.
These guidelines include a checklist for selecting a consultant, comparison of diversity consultant fees, desirable personal characteristics, and additional resources.

Wentling, R.M., and Palma-Rivas, N. ***Diversity in the Workforce Series.*** Berkeley: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, University of California, 1997.
Includes *Report #1—Literature Review: Report #2—Current Status and Future Trends of Diversity Initiatives in the Workplace: Diversity Experts' Perspective: Report #3—Current Status of Diversity Initiatives in Selected Multinational Corporations.*

Williams, T., and Green, A. ***Dealing with Difference. How Trainers Can Take Account of Cultural Diversity.*** Brookfield, VT: Gower, 1994.
Familiarizes trainers with the implications of culture on learning and development and provides them with techniques for taking different cultural values into account when planning and delivering training. Provides a checklist for trainers to use in assessing their ability to manage the implications of culture for the learning and development process.

Web Resources

American Institute for Managing Diversity, 50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 1150, Atlanta, GA 30303; 404/302-9226; fax: 404/302-9252; http://www.aimd.org/

Cultural Diversity at Work, 13751 Lake City Way NE, Suite 210, Seattle, WA 98125-8612; 206/362-0336; fax: 206/363-5028; e-mail: tldeane@diversityhotwire.com; http://www.diversityhotwire.com/

Diversity Forum features extensive links to and listings of job opportunities with companies that are committed to diversity; 408/995-3440; fax: 408/995-3441; e-mail: info@diversityforum.com; http://www.diversityforum.com/

National Association of Gender Diversity Training, 4621 East Abraham Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85024; 602/473-0426; fax: 602/473-0427; e-mail: gender@primenet.com; http://www.primenet.com/~gender

Developed with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under Contract No. RR93002001. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of OERI or the Department. ***Trends and Issues Alerts*** may be freely reproduced.

CENTER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
1900 Kenny Road · Columbus, Ohio 43210-1090

BEST COPY AVAILABLE